GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:207
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2002
MIS-MANAGEMENT IN WATER SECTOR
NAWAL KISHORE RAI;RAMJI LAL SUMAN

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank in its recent report has indicated that the country is suffering a loss to the tune of Rs.74,730 crores due to mismanagement in water sector;

(b) if so, whether the Government have studied the report;

(c) if so, the facts in this regard;

(d) the assessment in regard to loss being suffered on this count; and

(e) the remedial measures taken by the Government in this regard ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENTREFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a)TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTIONNO.207 TOBE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 29.7.2002 REGARDING MIS-MANAGEMENT OF WATER.

The World Bank in one of its reports entitled " Initiating and sustaining water sector reforms: a Synthesis" published in 1999 had opined that there were certain shortcomings in the water resources management in the country, such as emphasis on development of water resources instead of its efficient management, need for comprehensive basin-wise management of water resources, absence of conjunctive use of surface and ground water, lack of concerns for quality and quantity aspects of water and non resolution of contentious issues of allocation of inter-state river waters. The report has also estimated the costs of inaction on these fronts in monetary terms in respect of water pollution, soil degradation, and revenue deficit in the form of low water rates and power subsidy in agriculture.

The inadequacies mentioned in the World Bank report have already been addressed in the National Water Policyadopted in 1987, which has largely guided the water resources development in the country. Importance of efficient and sustainable development of water resources, integrated development of surface and ground water through conjunctive use, program for improvement in quality of water and its efficient utilization has been emphasized. State Governments are managing their water resources under these policy provisions. The imperatives of agricultural development and the sensitivities of socio − economic compulsions have guided the policies of the States on subsidy input to the agricultural and power sector . As such the alleged costs of inaction, as estimated in the World Bank report are not on sound footing.

The revised National Water Policy 2002, further accommodates measuresfor improved and sustainable development o f water resources.